

ON THE 28TH OF APRIL 1975, I WAS SCHEDULED FOR A DAY OFF WITH NO FLYING DUTIES. I PROCEEDED TO THE ACP/RW OFFICE TO CHECK ON SOME ITEMS AND WHILE THERE I WAS ASKED TO FLY CO-PILOT WITH [CAPT. OLSON] IN [4E] I AGREED, WENT HOME AND CHANGED INTO MY UNIFORM AND PROCEEDED BACK TO AIR AMERICA.

THE MISSION WAS TO FLY TO THE AREA OFF THE COAST OF [LOC TRANG] AND SAR FOR [CAPT. HITCHMAN, AND TAYLOR] WHO WERE FLYING PEOPLE TO SHIPS OFF THE COAST OF [CAN THO] WE DEPARTED [SAIGON] AT [1330] WITH THE FULL INTENT OF RETURNING THAT NIGHT AND SUBSEQUENTLY LEAVING MOST OF MY CLOTHES, ETC. BEHIND.

WE ARRIVED ON STATION AT [1430] REFUELED AT PHU VINH [V-52] AND FLEW AN UNEVENTFUL FLIGHT. WHILE ORBITING OVER THE [COAST] AT APPROXIMATELY [1600] THE SAIGON OPERATIONS MANAGER ANNOUNCED THAT [SAIGON] WAS RECEIVING INCOMING.

WE CONTINUED TO FLY OUR MISSION AND LATER LEARNED THAT [TAN SON NHUT AIRFIELD] WAS CLOSED. WE THEN DECIDED TO [LON] AT CAN THO THAT NIGHT LANDING AT [2000] WELL AFTER SUNSET.

ON THE MORNING OF THE 29 APRIL 1975, [CAPT. OLSON] AND MYSELF PROCEEDED DOWN TO THE [DELTA CLUB] TO HAVE BREAKFAST. WHILE WE WERE EATING ONE OF THE CUSTOMERS CAME IN AND NOTIFIED US THAT AIR AMERICA HAD LOST SOME [HELICOPTERS] IN A MORNING ROCKET ATTACK ON [TAN SON NHUT]. WE TOOK OFF AT [0830] IN HELICOPTER #110] TO RADIO [SAIGON] AND SEE EXACTLY WHAT WAS GOING ON. ON CONTACTING [THE SAIGON OPERATIONS MANAGER] WE FOUND THE SITUATION TO BE CONFUSED AND WERE INFORMED THAT WE WERE TO WORK FOR THE [CAN THO CUSTOMER] THAT DAY.

THE CUSTOMER SENT US TO BINH THUY WHERE WE PICKED UP 18 VIETNAMESE AND PROCEEDED TO FERRY THEM OFF THE COAST TO AN AWAITING SHIP ENROUTE TO THE SHIP WE LEARNED THAT BEDLAM AND CHAOS WERE BREAKING OUT IN SAIGON AND THE EVACUATION WOULD PROBABLY START SOON. WE PROCEEDED TO THE SHIP VANCOUVER AND DROPPED OUR 18 PASSENGERS REFUELED AND HEADED BACK FOR CAN THO ENROUTE WE HEARD THAT ONE OF OUR C-47S #083 HAD AN ENGINE FAILURE AFTER TAKEOFF AND WAS PROCEEDING TO CONSON ISLAND WITH A FULL LOAD OF PEOPLE. BEING ONLY 70 MILES FROM CON SON OURSELVES WE DECIDED TO SAR FOR 083 WE SET COURSE FOR CON SON AND AFTER ONE HOUR ARRIVED AND ESTABLISHED COMMUNICATIONS WITH OUR ALTERNATE RADIO TEAM AT CON SON WE REFUELED AT THE ISLAND THEN ORBITED WHILE 083 LANDED WITH NO OTHER PROBLEMS. UPON OUR ARRIVAL AT CON SON WE LEARNED THAT THE AIRFIELD WAS COMPLETELY CLUTTERED AND CHOKED WITH VNAF FIXED WING AIRCRAFT AND IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR FIXED WING AIRCRAFT TO GET FUEL BUT FUEL WAS AVAILABLE FOR ROTARY WING JOHN FORD WAS THE AIR AMERICA MAN IN CHARGE AT CON SON AND HE INFORMED US THAT HE WOULD REQUEST EVACUATION OF HIS PARTY AMERICAN AND FILIPINO INCLUDING A GROUP OF 5 AMERICANS FROM THE LORAN STATION WE MADE A TOTAL OF THREE TRIPS TO CON SON ISLAND FERRYING REFUGEES AND AIR AMERICA PEOPLE TO THE U.S.S. BARBOUR COUNTY AIRCRAFT 083 REPAIRED HIS FAULTY ENGINE AT CON SON AND FLEW ON TO BRUNEI

AFTER DROPPING OFF OUR LAST LOAD OF PASSENGERS ON THE BARBOUR COUNTY WE FLEW TO THE MAIN TASK FORCE OF SHIPS TO HELP OUT THE EVACUATION OF SAIGON WE DROPPED OFF ONE OF OUR PILOTS,

[CAPT. STADULIS ON THE BLUE RIDGE] THEN FLEW TO THE [COOK] AND WERE REFUELED WITHOUT INCIDENT. WE TOOK OFF AND HEADED STRAIGHT FOR [SAIGON.] UPON OUR ARRIVAL WE EVACUATED PEOPLE FROM THE ROOFTOPS OF [BUILDINGS 259, 192 CONG LY STREET AND USAID ON LE VAN DUYET STREET.] WE MADE APPROXIMATELY SIX TRIPS FROM THE ABOVE LOCATIONS EACH TIME DROPPING THE PEOPLE OFF AT THE [DAO THEATRE.] BY THIS TIME OUR FUEL WAS RUNNING LOW, IT WAS GETTING DARK AND WE HAD TO RETURN [TO THE SHIP.] WE PICKED UP 10 PAX AT THE [DAO THEATRE] AND FLEW OUT TO [SEA] WHERE WE WERE DIRECTED [TO LAND ON THE HANCOCK] [CAPT. OLSON] MADE AN UNEVENTFUL LANDING ON THE [CARRIER] AND WE PROCEEDED TO EMBARK OUR PASSENGERS AND SHUT DOWN FOR THE NIGHT, THE TIME WAS 1900. LATER ON THAT EVENING WE WERE TAKEN TO THE [WARDROOM] AND HAD DINNER AND A GOOD NIGHT'S REST.

ON THE MORNING OF 30 APRIL WE LEARNED THAT THE EVACUATION OF SAIGON WAS OVER. I HAD BREAKFAST IN THE [WARDROOM] WHERE I LEARNED THAT OUR [HELICOPTER] HAD BEEN LOOTED ON THE FLIGHT DECK AND THE CREW'S FLIGHT GEAR AND BAGGAGE WERE MISSING. ALL OF MY CLOTHES WERE STOLEN.

WE ARRIVED IN SUBIC BAY ON [3 MAY] AND FLEW THE HELICOPTERS TO [NAS CUBIC POINT] WE WERE THEN PROCESSED AT THE GYM AND WERE FLOWN TO [MANILA] THAT NIGHT. WE SPENT THE NIGHT AT THE [CARLSTON HOTEL] AND THE FOLLOWING MORNING WENT TO THE [MANILA AIRPORT] WE BOARDED A 1445 [PHILIPPINES AIRLINES FLIGHT FOR HONG KONG.] WE ARRIVED AT THE [SHERATON HOTEL] AT APPROXIMATELY 1800 ON 4 MAY 1975

[CAPT. R. C. GOODWIN #22554]
AIR AMERICA, INC.